

*Journal of Development Economics*  
Pre-Results Review (Registered Reports)  
Optional Stage 1 Submission Template

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## Instructions

The following template is intended to assist you in the preparation of your Stage 1 Proposal submission as part of the pre-results review track (also referred to as “registered reports”) at the *Journal of Development Economics*.

Stage 1 Proposal submissions normally include a description of the key background literature and motivation for the study, hypotheses, study procedures, proposed statistical analysis plan, a statistical power analysis, and pilot data (wherever applicable). Beyond these, the following items are required for all Stage 1 submissions:

- *Cover Page*, including title of the study, author name(s) and institutional affiliation(s), date of the latest draft, keywords, JEL codes, and study pre-registration status;
- *Proposed timeline for completion of the study*, if accepted based on pre-results review;
- *Abstract* of up to 150 words;
- *Administrative Information* section (included at the end of the submission), including statements on funding, ethics approval, conflicts of interest and acknowledgments.

*Note that not all of the fields included in this template may be applicable to your research project.* If so, please feel free to modify or delete sections accordingly. For items that are not commonly found in JDE papers (e.g. ex-ante plans for data processing, variations from intended sample size, pilot data, etc.), please include a brief summary in the body of the paper, and include the details as an appendix to the Stage 1 Proposal.

The [JDE Author Guidelines for Pre-Results Review](#) provide more information specific to submissions in this track, and the [JDE Author Information Pack](#) provides general information on the JDE’s topical and methodological scope, impact factor, and rules for abstracting and indexing. You can also find more information in the [FAQs for Authors](#).

For editorial questions, please contact either Editor Prof. Dean Karlan ([karlan@northwestern.edu](mailto:karlan@northwestern.edu)) or Lead Editor Prof. Andrew Foster ([afoster@brown.edu](mailto:afoster@brown.edu)).

## Cover page (required)

# *Journal of Development Economics* Registered Report Stage 1: Proposal

## (Insert study title here)

**Authors and institutional affiliation:** Provide name and institutional affiliation of all authors, and indicate the corresponding author.

**Date of latest draft:** MM/DD/YYYY

### **Abstract (required)**

Limit the abstract content to a maximum of 150 words. An abstract is often presented separately from the article, so it must be able to stand alone.

To the extent possible, address the following questions in your abstract:

- What is/are the research question(s) of this study and why is it important for the development economics literature?
- What is the main outcome variable; what is/are the secondary outcome variable(s) (if any) and what is the intervention?
- What kind of methodological framework will the study use to address the research question?

**Keywords:** Provide up to six keywords in for indexing purposes.

**JEL codes:** Provide up to six codes from those available [here](#).

**Study pre-registration:** Provide the registry name, registration identifier, and/or a link to the public registration if available. If a pre-registration has not been completed, indicate whether you plan to complete pre-registration before the commencement of data collection. See the 'Pre-registration Resources' section of the [JDE Author Guidelines for Pre-Results Review](#) for a list of suggested registries.

### **Proposed timeline (required)**

If accepted based on pre-results review, please indicate when this study will be completed. *The proposed timeline will not have an impact on the editorial decision at Stage 1.* However, authors will be expected communicate any changes in the study timeline to the Editor.

## **Reporting checklist for Stage 1 submissions** *(optional)*

Reporting checklist table with research design details available for download [here](#).

# 1. Introduction

## Research question: background, importance and relevance

- What is the main problem/question motivating the study? Why is this question important for the field of development economics?
- How has this question been addressed thus far in the relevant literature? What are the competing theories for explanation of this question? How is this study different from prior research on this problem/question?

# 2. Research Design

## Hypotheses

- What are the main outcomes of interest? Which outcomes are primary to the analysis, which are secondary, and why?
- How will the main outcomes of interest be defined in your dataset? If applicable, how will they be aggregated?
- Please include all hypotheses which will be tested, linking each outcome specifically to how it will be measured. These should be reported as main results in the Stage 2 submission.

## Basic methodological framework / identification strategy

- What is the basic methodological framework of the study (RCT, pre-post, simple comparison, difference-in-difference etc.)? Why is it suitable to address this research question?

## Intervention

- What type of an intervention does the study involve<sup>1</sup>? Elaborate in detail when, where and by whom it will be delivered. Please provide sufficient detail to allow for replication in line with this journal's [Mandatory Replication Policy](#).
- How will individual observations be assigned to treatment and control conditions<sup>2</sup>?
- How is participation in the program defined for the purpose of your study?
- Are there multiple treatment arms involved and if so, are they exclusive or overlapping?
- What is the source of exogenous variation in your study?
- If applicable, what observations will be blinded (masked)<sup>3</sup> after assignment to interventions and how? If blinding is not possible, what measures will be taken to minimize the potential for

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<sup>1</sup> For useful information on reporting standards for interventions, see Hoffmann et al. (2014).

<sup>2</sup> For useful information on what to report on randomization, see Bruhn and McKenzie (2009).

<sup>3</sup> Blinding or masking refers to methods of withholding information about assigned interventions post-randomization from those involved in the trial, when knowledge of this information could influence their behavior in a way that would later prove integral to interpreting the results.

performance and expectancy biases (e.g. keeping participants unaware of trial hypotheses, measuring participant and provider expectations of benefit at baseline, etc.)?

- The instructions and supporting materials for the administration of the intervention should be included as an appendix.

### **Sample and statistical power**

- What is the unit of analysis for this sample (individuals, organizations, etc.)?
- What is the expected sample size? Please include statistical power calculations<sup>4</sup> to justify sample size. How does your statistical power compare to other contributions in the literature?
- What is the minimum effect size you will be able to detect?

## **3. Data**

Please use this section to provide details on pilot data and *prospective* data that you will collect after Stage 1 of peer review is complete. Summarize the proposed procedures in the body of the paper, and include more details as an appendix.

### **Data collection and processing (*include in the appendix*)**

- What are the key data sources? What data collection procedures and instruments will be used?
- What is the rule for terminating data collection (number of observations, available funds, available time, etc.)?
- How long will the data collection process take? If data will be collected at multiple points (longitudinal design), what is the proposed schedule (including enrollment, intervention delivery and outcome assessment)?

### **Variations from the intended sample size**

- Do you anticipate any challenges in collecting data (attrition, non-compliance with the assigned treatment, etc.) and what measures do you plan to take to address them?

### **Pilot data**

- Summarize any pilot data used in preparation for this submission. These can be included to establish effect size estimates, feasibility, or proof of concept.

## **4. Analysis**

Please use this section to present your strategy for statistical analysis. In the appendices section of this submission, please also include any computer programs, configuration files or scripts which will be used to run the experiment and to analyze the data.

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<sup>4</sup> You can find useful information and software tools for power calculations [here](#).

## Statistical methods

- What statistical methods will be used to analyze the data and what are their underlying assumptions?
- How will the study deal with missing values?
- How do you define and handle outliers?

## Statistical model

Provide the model in its functional form and submit math equations as text and not as images.

## Multiple outcome and multiple hypothesis testing

- How will the study address false positives from multiple hypothesis testing?
  - If you plan to adjust your standard errors, what adjustment procedure will you use? (e.g., Family Wise Error Rate, False Discovery Rates, etc.)
  - If you plan to aggregate multiple variables into an index, which variables will you aggregate and how?

## Heterogeneous Effects

- Which groups do you anticipate will display heterogeneous effects? What leads you to anticipate these effects? Specify which baseline variable(s) will be used for heterogeneity analysis.

## 5. Interpreting Results

- Depending on the outcome of the test(s), how will you interpret the results in the light of competing theories?
- How do they contribute to the development economics literature?
- What are the potential implications for policy?

## 6. Bibliography

References can be in any style or format as long as the style is consistent.

## 7. Appendices

If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Formulae and equations in appendices should be given separate numbering: Eq. (A.1), Eq. (A.2), etc.; in a subsequent appendix, Eq. (B.1) and so on. Similarly for tables and figures: Table A.1; Fig. A.1, etc.

## 8. Administrative information *(required)*

**Funding:** Please list funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

(e.g. "This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers #####, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number #####]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number #####]").

If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence: "This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors."

**Institutional Review Board (ethics approval):** If applicable, please include a statement confirming that all necessary ethics approvals are in place.

**Declaration of interest:** Please provide a statement on competing interests, even if you have no competing interests to declare.

Examples of potential conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. If there are no conflicts of interest then please state 'none'. You can learn more about our policies on conflicts of interests [here](#).

**Acknowledgments:** Please list here individuals who provided help during the research, however are not considered authors (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).

## Bibliography

Bruhn, Miriam, and David McKenzie. 2009. "In Pursuit of Balance: Randomization in Practice in Development Field Experiments." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1 (4):200–232. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.1.4.200>.

Hoffmann, Tammy C., Paul P. Glasziou, Isabelle Boutron, Ruairidh Milne, Rafael Perera, David Moher, Douglas G. Altman, et al. 2014. "Better Reporting of Interventions: Template for Intervention Description and Replication (TIDieR) Checklist and Guide." *BMJ* 348 (March):g1687. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.g1687>.